

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Copy No. 3

GEOGRAPHIC INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

CIA/RR GM 63-I
February 1963

REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO JANUARY 1963

(Revision of CIA/RR GM 60-3, 30 September 1960)



DOCUMENT NO. 1
NO CHANGE IN CLASS. ☐
DECLASSIFIED
CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S C
NEXT REVIEW DATE: 30/8/79
AUTH: HR 70-2
DATE: 30/8/79 REVIEWER: 035377

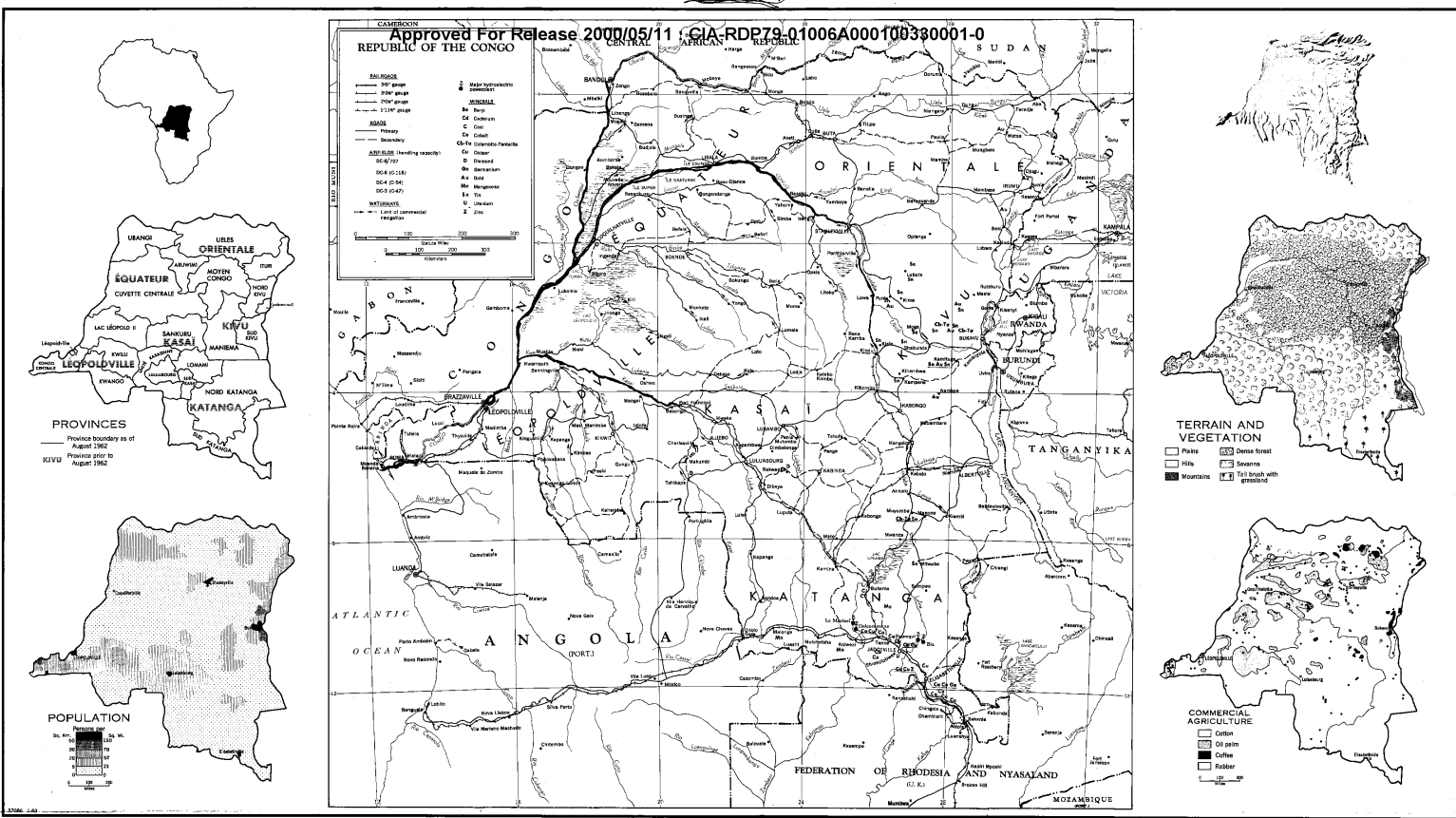
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND REPORTS

WARNING

This material contains information affecting the National Defense of the United States within the meaning of the espionage laws, Title 18, USC, Secs. 793 and 794, the transmission or revelation of which in any manner to an unauthorized person is prohibited by law.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

GROUP 1
EXCLUDED FROM AUTOMATIC DOWNGRADING
AND DECLASSIFICATION



REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO-JANUARY 1963

The growth of the Republic of the Congo has been handicapped by the lack of cultural and physical elements that are conducive to the formation of a national consciousness. The virtually landlocked republic is almost coterminous with the Congo River basin, but the unifying influence of the river system is limited by the great distances that it spans and the numerous unworkable stretches that interrupt river traffic. Unification is further retarded by the existence of a highly diverse and unevenly distributed population that consistently places sectional interests above those of national solidarity. Most of the population is still engaged in subsistence agriculture, and the available manpower with administrative and technical skills falls far short of meeting the needs of a developing nation. The Congo has both the agricultural and mineral resources that are required to sustain a viable economy, but regional cooperation must be attained before real progress is achieved. The mineral-rich Katanga, an important element in the economic stabilization of the Congo, is culturally and economically isolated from the rest of the republic and will have separatist tendencies even after the present crisis eases.

Physical Setting

The Republic of the Congo lies astride the equator on the tableland of central Africa and slopes westward from the interrupted chain of mountains that flank the African Rift Valley. From heights of 6,000 feet or more on the east, elevations drop rapidly toward the west, and except for the hilly sections of eastern and central Katanga, practically all of the republic lies below 3,000 feet. Virtually all of the land is drained westward by the Congo River system. The Congo River flows almost to the sea before it drops to an elevation of 600 feet. In the big bend of the river west of Fort Pranzoni and Stanleyville, elevations are generally below 1,000 feet, relief is negligible, the rivers meander, and swamps abound. This section is the heart of the dense forests of broadleaved evergreens. Where a dry season is firmly established on the northern and southern margins of this section, the dense forest gives way to open savanna that in turn gives way farther south to predominantly grass-covered plains and uplands. In the southeastern half of the former Katanga Province the grasslands are mixed with tall scrub or thin forest.

The typical monotonous climate of the tropics prevails throughout the Congo, but latitude and altitude introduce discernible variations. Only the area within 3 or 4 degrees north and south of the equator is without some dry weather. Dry seasons occur in the extreme north (December through February) and in the south (May through October). Annual rainfall is not high for the tropics -- 50 inches in the south and 70 inches in the north. Daily maximum temperatures generally reach the high 80's or low 90's, except in the eastern highlands, where both temperature and humidity are lower.

The Congo is endowed with resources that could be made to support a sound and fairly well-rounded economy. The famous mineral wealth, largely in the Katanga (80 percent) but also in Kivu (10 percent), Kasai (5 percent), and Orientale (4 percent) regions normally accounts for 20 percent of the gross national product and 50 percent of the value of all exports. The combination of large and fairly constant river flow and many drops in water level provides great opportunity for the development of hydroelectric power. The Congo is reputed to have a technical potential for about 60,000 megawatts of hydroelectric generating capacity -- about 15 percent of the estimated world total -- but to date, only the nearest fraction of this amount, or about 700 megawatts, has been installed. Coal is of minor and decreasing importance.

Environmental conditions permit a variety of economic activities, most of which are adaptable to either small-scale or large-scale operations. The tropical rain forest of the central and lower Congo basin is a tract of commercial timber that covers 394,000 square miles, or 43 percent of the country. Locally, the smaller tracts from the savanna and bushland are used extensively. Food crops for local use can be grown almost everywhere. Both commercial plantings that thrive on continuous moisture and those that require dry seasons can be accommodated, but areas in the dense forest require more clearing and their soils generally more amelioration than areas in the savanna. Commercial fishing in the lakes and rivers, which still is inadequate for local needs but is expanding, amounts to more than 20 pounds per person per year. Unrecorded native fishing and hunting probably provide a considerable amount of food. In eastern Kivu, Parc National Albert offers 3,400 square miles of spectacular natural attractions for the development of a tourist industry.

Population

The 14 million people of the Congo are distributed unevenly over about 900,000 square miles, an area approximately equal to that of the United States east of the Mississippi River. At the time the Congo became independent, approximately two-thirds of the African population was engaged in subsistence agriculture. The remainder -- 4 million to 5 million persons, including dependents -- had been drawn into the labor markets of the mines, plantations, and larger cities. In 1960, only one-fourth of the population lived in urban areas. The insecurity of rural areas and the general decline of commercial agriculture since independence, however, have increased the flow of people to the city. Once in the city, these new arrivals swell the very large numbers of unskilled workers for whom jobs are not available and for whom food must be provided.

Six months before the Congo became independent, the European population -- around whom industry and government revolved -- numbered approximately 115,000, or less than 1 percent of the total population. About 50,000 of the Europeans were engaged in commerce and industry in the Leopoldville area or in the Katanga, another 20,000 were independent agriculturists who were concentrated in eastern Kivu, and 10,000 were civil servants assigned to various posts in the colonial government. Six months after independence only 25,000 Europeans remained. Toward the end of 1962 the greatly used teachers, technicians, advisors, and merchants were slowly returning to many areas. The white farmers are not returning. Currently, the European population of the Congo is estimated to be 50,000, excluding United Nations personnel.

Cultural heterogeneity is one of the underlying causes of much of the unrest in the Congo. As in many of the new countries of Africa, the population of the Congo is divided by regional conflicts that are influenced by the various local interests of more than 200 ethnic groupings. The problem is acute because of the size of the country and the variety of interests represented. Under the colonial administration the tribes as such were demobilized, but tribal associations were perpetuated through cultural societies. As the Congo approached independence, these societies blossomed into active political parties such as Kasavubu's ABAKO (Alliance des Bakongo) and Tshombe's CONAKAT (Confederation des Associations de Katanga). In most cases these parties attracted followings comprised of people who were concerned lest rival ethnic groups and traditional enemies assume administrative authority. At most, the parties could be considered to have no more than provincial scope. National parties or mass communication on a national level did not exist. When the colonial administration collapsed, 10 parties assumed control of individual regions and sent their own regionally oriented representatives to the National Chamber of Deputies. Although a number of the original 10 influential parties are no longer active, regional interests are still dominant, and no truly national parties have arisen.

The six provinces that the new Republic of the Congo inherited from the Belgian Congo in 1960 had been established for the administrative convenience of the colonial government. In August 1962, they were replaced by 20 provinces that were created primarily along the lines of tribal groupings. Because each of the new provinces represents a relatively homogeneous population under local leadership, the hope has been expressed that provincial administration now will be simplified, and the cause of national unity will be strengthened. It appears, however, that the leaders in the new provinces have no more feeling for national goals than the tribal leaders had in the past. The new provincial governments have evidenced little interest in problems of the central government and appear to be particularly irresponsible in economic matters.

Economy

The economy of the Congo is unusual for an underdeveloped country. When it achieved independence, its assets included a well-developed and profitably operated minerals complex, a system of commercial agriculture that produced revenue equal to about one-third of the total value of all exports, expanding output of light industry in the former Leopoldville and Katanga Provinces, and an integrated river and rail transport system. These assets were managed from Antwerp and Brussels and were closely coordinated with the colonial administration. An estimated 85 percent of the commercial activity of the Congo is still controlled by foreign firms, but little coordination with the central government is apparent.

In 1959 the minerals and metallurgical industries accounted for 62 percent of the total value of all exports, although these same industries employed only 10 percent of the wage-earning labor force. During 1954-59 the Congo produced 72 percent of the world's industrial diamonds, 60 percent of the cobalt (nine basis), 30 percent of the germanium, 10 percent of the tin (nine basis), and 7 percent of the copper. Copper from the Katanga was the largest single source of foreign exchange. The bulk of the minerals that have been exported from the Katanga have always been carried by rail to the Portuguese ports of Lobito in Angola and Beira in Mozambique, in preference to using the costly internal rail-and-water route to the port of Matadi within the Congo.

As of 1959 the agricultural sector of the economy provided 38 percent of the total value of all exports -- primarily palm oil, coffee, cotton, and rubber -- and employed almost three times as many wage earners as the metals industries employed. Palm oil, the most significant agricultural export, accounted for more than 25 percent of the world's supply. Subsistence farming, chiefly the cultivation of manioc, plantains, maize, and rice, continues to occupy the majority of the Congolese. In spite of the notable deficiency of protein in the diet and the relatively large areas suitable for raising cattle, the Congo has fewer cattle proportionally than neighboring countries.

The productive elements of the Congolese economy have suffered relatively little in view of the chaos surrounding the first 30 months of independence. Except for the recent sabotage of bridges and power lines in the Katanga, the industrial complex has remained intact, and the production of minerals has continued at a favorable rate through 1962. Destruction of rail bridges has reduced the flexibility of rail service and will stop service through Lubumbashi to Fort Pranzoni for a period of 3 to 6 months, but it has not isolated Kolwezi or Elisabethville from export routes through Angola or Mozambique. The total economy, however, has suffered greatly because of the fragmentation of the country and the almost total lack of effective administrative authority on the part of the central government.

Inflation, serious unemployment, administrative chaos, and shortages of capital plague the Congo. Before independence, much of the wealth that was created by the minerals industries found its way into the treasury of the Congo Government through direct taxes, export duties, and profit-sharing arrangements. Since independence, these revenues have not been collected systematically by the central government. Although river transport facilities are still relatively intact, road transportation is seriously disrupted. Trucks that once hauled agricultural products from producing areas to local heads and river ports have long since broken down, and many of the roads on which new trucks are beginning to roll are considered to be unserviceable for most of the year. Disruption of transport and uncertainty about protective security measures have driven out many European plantation owners as well as many of the Greek and Portuguese traders who played an important role in the agricultural economy of the former Orientale and Kivu Provinces. Without the Europeans to provide direction and employment and without the traders to purchase the products and sell the necessities, many African farmers who produced only on a limited commercial scale have reverted to a subsistence level or have abandoned agriculture altogether. The traders are returning, but they may not remain long because business conditions continue to remain depressed. Shortages of all kinds make life particularly difficult for the wage-earning city dweller.

Rejuvenation of the economy will be heavily dependent on regional cooperation, particularly the integration of the Katanga into the country as a whole. Under colonial rule the regional economies were never integrated, and the Katanga in particular has faced away from the rest of the Congo in both economic and cultural affairs. In terms of raw materials, power, labor, managerial skills, markets, and transportation, the Katanga functions without assistance from the north. Many of these assets are closely related to the industries of Northern Rhodesia. Power is switched back and forth across the border in time of peak demand, rail service between the Katanga and Northern Rhodesia is coordinated, and spare parts for equipment are often supplied through Rhodesia.

The way of life in the Katanga resembles that in industrialized areas of the Rhodesias more closely than it resembles that of any other area of the Congo. This similarity stems from the way in which the minerals complex is operated and the favored economic position of European technicians and managers in the community. The settlement of current problems will not greatly alter the tendency of the Katanga to remain isolated from the remainder of the nation. The African population does not care about the problems of the central government and will remain indifferent until a national consciousness develops. The outlook of the European population will continue to be similar in many respects to that of the white population of central and southern Africa.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

25X1A

Analysts: [REDACTED]

Approved For Release 2000/05/11 : CIA-RDP79-01006A000100330001-0 (Project 62.2118)

OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND REPORTS

Control Staff

Control Sheet

CONFIDENTIALGROUP 1
Excluded from automatic
downgrading and
declassification

Series Number CIA/RR GM 63-1

Classification

Date of Document February 1963

Number of Copies 317

Copy No.

Recipient

Date

Return

| Copy No. | Recipient | Date | Return |
|-----------|---------------------------------|------------|-----------|
| 1 | AD/RR | 25X1A | 12 Feb 63 |
| 2 | DDI | " | " |
| 3 | LOAN -- [REDACTED] OCR | " | " |
| 73 - 108 | Rec'd in St/P/C | 13 Feb 63 | 8 Mar 63 |
| 73 + 104 | [REDACTED] | 15 Feb 63 | " |
| 74 - 78 | [REDACTED] | " | " |
| 79 - 81 | [REDACTED] | " | " |
| 82, 83 | [REDACTED] | " | " |
| 84 - 101 | [REDACTED] | 14 Feb 63 | " |
| 102 | [REDACTED] | " | " |
| 103 | [REDACTED] | " | " |
| 104 - 108 | Filed in St/P/C | " | " |
| 301 - 317 | D/GC | 8 Feb 63 | " |
| 159 - 168 | Received from Records Center | 18 Feb 63 | " |
| 159 - 168 | [REDACTED] D/GC | 18 Feb 63 | " |
| 169 - 173 | Received from Records Center | 20 Feb 63 | " |
| 169 | [REDACTED] DGL/IG Staff | 20 Feb 63 | " |
| 106 + 107 | [REDACTED] 20/C | 8 Mar 63 | " |
| 112 | Rec'd in St/P/C | 8 Mar 63 | " |
| 105 | [REDACTED] St/P/C to review for | 19 Mar 63 | " |
| 170 - 171 | [REDACTED] | 26 Mar 63 | " |
| 108 | CIA Library for David West. | 26 Mar 63 | " |
| 172 | CIA Library for DIA/SA-2B | 27 Mar 63 | " |
| 174 - 176 | Received from Records Center | 28 Mar 63 | " |
| 177 - 179 | Received from Records Center | 29 Mar 63 | " |
| 179 | [REDACTED] PCS/OCR | 5 Apr 63 | " |
| 173 - 174 | [REDACTED] TRIP/AN Unit 4 | 5 Apr 63 | " |
| 105 | [REDACTED] | 3 May 63 | " |
| 175 - 177 | [REDACTED] | " | " |
| 180 - 184 | Received from Records Center | 7 May 63 | " |
| 180 | [REDACTED] WSKR for NEW | 9 May 63 | " |
| 178 | [REDACTED] AR/Py | 31 May 63 | " |
| 181 | CIA Lx. for DIA/PP-1A2 (AMS) | 9 Jul 63 | " |
| 182 | [REDACTED] WSKR | 21 Aug 63 | " |
| 183 | [REDACTED] OCR/Py for files | 5 Sept 63 | " |
| 185 - 189 | Received from Records Center | 11 Sept 63 | " |
| 184 - 186 | [REDACTED] L/G | 25 Sept 63 | " |
| 187 | [REDACTED] | 20 Oct 63 | " |
| 188 | [REDACTED] | 23 Jan 64 | " |
| 189 | [REDACTED] | " | " |

CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S/C 1989
 NEXT REVIEW DATE:
 AUTH: HR 70-2
 DATE: 2/26/89 REVIEWED: 035377

CIA-RDP79-01006A000100330001-0

25X1A

190-194 J. RC 23 Jan 64
Approved For Release 2000/05/11 : CIA-RDP79-01006A000100330001-0

29 Jan 64

25X1A

195-198 from RC to [redacted] ocr for [redacted]
189 [redacted] LS/CR for 10/14

24 Feb 64

25X1C

25X1A

15 Jan 64

25X1A

1, 193, 194
1, 200 - 206 Rec'd from RC
200 CTA by [redacted] for file copy
201-206 [redacted]

16 Sep 64

25X1A

207-212 Rec'd from Records Center
207 [redacted]

18 Sep 64

18 Sep 64

21 Sep 64

21 Sep 64

5 Mar 65

25X1A

208 [redacted]

213-215 from RC to [redacted], Acting
Librarian, ocr

27 May 65

25X1A

GM 63-1

Feb 63

140

~~130~~ ~~125~~ ~~122~~ ~~219~~ ~~214~~
~~209~~ ~~204~~ ~~199~~ ~~192~~ ~~196~~ ~~193~~

| | | |
|----|---|---|
| 10 | 5 | 6 |
| 5 | 5 | 3 |
| 3 | 5 | |
| 3 | 7 | |